

# Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

## Forty-second Assembly District

*proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks*



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **KORETZ CALLS DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP EXPANSION HISTORIC**

**(San Francisco)** Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) tonight joined Governor Gray Davis and other officials for the signing of AB 205 (Goldberg) The Domestic Partners Rights and Responsibilities Act of 2003. Koretz and the members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender (LGBT) Caucus are joint authors of the bill and actively supported its passage.

“The Governor’s signing of AB 205 is a historic event for the LGBT community, this state, and the nation. This new law extends virtually all the rights and responsibilities the state can convey to domestic partners, and is vitally important to gay and lesbian families,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

With the signing of AB 205, Governor Davis brings California domestic partners legal protections equal to those offered by Vermont’s Civil Unions. Effective on January 1, 2005, more than 20,000 domestic partners registered with the California Secretary of State will gain most of the rights and responsibilities of marriage.

“Governor Davis has shown courageous leadership by supporting Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg’s hard-fought effort to protect gay and lesbian families. AB 205 is undoubtedly the most important law that will be enacted during my tenure in the State Assembly, and it’s the largest step the state has ever taken to protect gay families from discrimination,” noted Koretz.

Opponents charge the bill is the equivalent of marriage and, therefore, in violation of Proposition 22. That initiative statute, passed by the voters in 1999, defines marriage as only between a man and a woman. However, in an analysis of the legality of AB 205, State Legislative Counsel Diane F. Boyer-Vine said, “Nothing in the language of the initiative statute, nor in the ballot arguments in support of the initiative, indicates any intent or requirement that the Legislature be limited in its authority to enact new laws regarding the rights and obligations of domestic partners.”

A long time advocate for gay and lesbian rights, Koretz authored legislation similar to AB 205 in the last legislative session that would have brought Vermont style Civil Unions to California. Mr. Koretz and the LGBT Caucus that includes Assemblymembers Goldberg, Kehoe, Laird, Leno, and

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Senator Kuehl, decided to set aside Civil Union and work to expand domestic partnership because it is a term that is better understood and accepted by most Californians.

“Current domestic partnership law is woefully inadequate at dealing with issues of fairness and compassion when tragedy strikes gay families. Child custody, child support, and community property are all mechanisms that protect children and families when things go wrong. Tonight, Governor Davis extends these vital protections to gay and lesbian families,” said Mr. Koretz.

“Governor Davis has been a strong supporter of equal rights for LGBT Californians. He signed the legislation that first created domestic partnerships at the state level, the bill that protects gay kids from harassment in schools, he strengthened our hate crimes law, and he recently signed AB 196 prohibiting gender discrimination in housing and employment,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

“Under the administration of Governor Pete Wilson, California trailed far behind other states in the expansion of gay and lesbian rights. Davis’ support for equal treatment under the law for all people has made California a civil rights leader on the national stage,” noted Koretz.

According to the 2000 Census, Mr. Koretz’s hometown of West Hollywood weighs in at nearly 20% of all couples being same-sex partners, ranking third in the nation behind the gay resort towns of Provincetown, MA and Guerneville, CA.

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